

MICHIGAN RECEIVES TWO MORE CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROJECT GRANTS

In December 2006, EPA Region 5 awarded the Tuscola Intermediate School District and NextEnergy Center in Detroit each a grant under the Clean School Bus USA program to help retrofit new or used buses with diesel oxidation catalysts (DOCs) and/or replace old buses with new, less polluting buses. The goal of Clean School Bus USA is to reduce both exposure to diesel exhaust and the amount of air pollution created by diesel school buses, which has health implications for everyone, especially children. Diesel exhaust contains nitrogen oxides (NO_x) a precursor of ozone, PM_{2.5}, and air toxics that are unhealthy to breathe, especially for people with respiratory diseases and for children and adults who are active outdoors. Exposure to these pollutants affects breathing, aggravates existing respiratory and cardiovascular ailments, and has been linked with heart and lung disease, with PM_{2.5} being linked to the most serious health effects.



Launched in April 2003, Clean School Bus USA brings together partners from business, education, transportation, and public health organizations to help reduce pollutant exposure. Measures include eliminating unnecessary school bus idling, promoting the use of biodiesel (a domestically produced, renewable fuel manufactured from new and used vegetable oils and animal fats) to reduce air pollutants such as PM and air toxics, and upgrading school buses by either replacing them or retrofitting them with pollution control devices (DOCs are devices that use a chemical process to break down pollutants in the exhaust stream into less harmful components). Since 2004, Michigan schools have been the recipient of the following grants under the Clean School Bus USA program:

- June 14, 2004, the Ann Arbor Public Schools received \$95,357 to retrofit 110 buses and to also provide a two-year supply of biodiesel fuel for 18 buses in the neighboring Manchester Community Schools.
- June 14, 2004, the Okemos Public School, partnering with the DEQ, 10 other school districts, technology vendors and local communities, used a \$70,000 Clean School Bus USA grant and \$12,500 district match to retrofit 78 buses. Their successful pilot program, recognized by the media and by national and state environmental programs, awarded them the opportunity to win a second grant totaling \$388,519 under this same program in 2006.
- February 20, 2006, the DEQ again partnering with the Okemos District, along with recipient contributions of \$167,524, received a second grant totaling \$388,519 that expanded the 2004 pilot program by retrofitting a total of 372 buses; 89 buses from the 2004 program area and 283 buses from every participating school district located within Michigan's twenty-five ozone and seven PM_{2.5} nonattainment counties.
- February 20, 2006, the Traverse City Area Public Schools received \$140,365, with the school district contributing an additional \$38,956, to retrofit 120 school buses and to replace one 1984 model year school bus.
- December 20, 2006, NextEnergy Center in Detroit received \$95,000 to retrofit 58 school buses in the Hamilton Community Schools, Hartland Consolidated Schools, Howell Public Schools, and the Edwardsburg School District.
- December 21, 2006, the Tuscola Intermediate School District in Caro received \$50,000 to retrofit 24 school buses and to help buy biodiesel fuel for all 75 buses in the Tuscola Intermediate School District, Cass City Public Schools, Vassar Public Schools, and Millington Community Schools.

To learn more about EPA's Clean School Bus USA program, including grant and funding options and other types of diesel retrofit projects, visit their website at <http://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/>.